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thus a long time elapses before any actual rupture occurs, and before recourse is had to that appeal which arms alone afford. In the course of those proceedings, opportunities occur for one or other of the parties to obtain the opinion of a third nation, friendly to both, and having no private or separate interest to promote. A nation so circumstanced may, I think, well offer its mediation; and I have incurred no small amount of obloquy, and perhaps ridicule also, on the ground that I have been too forward to offer mediation in such cases as those I have just been describing.

BRIGHT ON THE EASTERN WAR.

Our readers who have heard the rumor that John Bright, the able and eloquent advocate of peace in the House of Commons, was burnt in effigy by some of his constituents at Manchester, may like to see some specimens of the letter which provoked such an exhibition of vulgar revenge. It was in reply to a formal request for the reasons of his opposition to the war—a document singularly calm and candid, yet marked with great ability and eloquence. The letter is brief, but, as republished in the pamphlet form which we copy, is accompanied with thrice as much matter in the form of notes. We give a few of the closing paragraphs:—

Now, observe the course taken by our Government. They agreed to the Vienna note; not fewer than five members of this Cabinet have filled the office of Foreign Secretary, and therefore may be supposed capable of comprehending its meaning: it was a note drawn up by the friends of Turkey; they urged its acceptance on the Russian Government, and the Russian Government accepted it; there was then a dispute about its precise meaning, and Russia agreed, and even proposed, that the arbitrators at Vienna should amend it, by explaining it, and limiting its meaning, so that no question of its intention should henceforth exist. But the Turks having rejected it, our Government turned round, and declared the Vienna note, their own note, entirely inadmissible, and defended the conduct of the Turks in having rejected it. The Turks declared war, against the advice of the English and French Governments*—so, at least, it appears from the “blue-books;”

*They insisted upon war, not only against the advice, but against the almost agonizing entreaties of the Western Powers, and especially of the English Government. Nothing is more manifest from the latter part of these Blue Books, than that the Turks felt that they were absolute masters of the situation—that they could safely spurn all efforts at conciliation, because England and France had placed themselves in such a position that, according to the language of Lord Clarendon, ‘they must perforce side with Turkey.’ Thus Lord Stratford, on the 20th of September, represents himself as ‘imploving’ Reshid Pacha, at least to suspend the declaration of war for a short time; and on the 1st of October, this same Reshid Pacha, after declaring that the Turkish Government had, in spite of the ‘imploving’ entreaty of our Ambassador, ‘determined upon going to war,’ instructs the Turkish Ambassador, in London, in these cool words:—‘The Imperial Government, under existing circumstances, reckons upon the moral and material support of England and France; and it is to that object that the language which you have to hold at London should be directed.’ It is clear, also, that Lord Clarendon and Lord Stratford de Redcliffe felt that they had placed England helplessly in the power of the Turks; and it would be almost ludicrous, but for the painful consequences involved, to see the eager and impotent efforts made by them both, when it was too late, to lay the spirit they had raised at Constantinople.

Lord Clarendon, writing October 24th, 1853, says—‘It is my duty to inform your Excellency, that her Majesty’s Government observe with regret, that due attention

but the moment war was declared by Turkey, our Government applauded it. England, then, was committed to war. She had promised armed assistance to Turkey—a country without government, and whose administration was at the mercy of contending factions, and incapable of fixing a policy for herself, she allowed herself to be dragged on by the current of events at Constantinople. She “drifted,” as Lord Clarendon said, exactly describing his own position, into the war, apparently without rudder and without compass.

The whole policy of our Government in this matter is marked with an imbecility perhaps without example. I will not say they intended a war from the first, though there are not wanting many evidences that war was the object of at least a section of the Cabinet. A distinguished member of the House of Commons said to a friend of mine, immediately after the accession of the present Government to office, ‘You have a war Ministry, and you will have a war.’ But I leave this question to point out the disgraceful feebleness of the Cabinet, if I am to absolve them from the guilt of having sought occasion for war. They promised the Turk armed assistance on conditions, or without conditions. They, in concert with France, Austria, and Prussia, took the original dispute out of the hands of Russia and Turkey, and formed

has not been paid by the Turkish Government to the advice tendered by your Excellency, with a sincere regard for the Sultan’s own interests, and when, with no other motive than that of preserving peace without detriment to the honor and independence of the Sultan, you desired that the declaration of war, and the commencement of hostilities, should be delayed until all attempts at negotiation should have proved unsuccessful.’ And what is the explanation? Why, that the French and English had gone too far, and could not retreat; for Lord Cowley in trying to persuade M. Drouyn de Lhuys that the Olmutz note, which the French Emperor was willing to accept, ought to be rejected, says very significantly, ‘I asked M. Drouyn de Lhuys whether the Emperor himself had considered the position in which the two Governments would find themselves, if, with their faces towards Constantinople, they pressed the acceptance of the Vienna note, (i. e. with the Olmutz addition) upon the Porte, and the Porte persisted in her refusal, and war was the consequence?’ So again, Lord Stratford, writing on November 17th 1853, after telling Lord Clarendon that a ‘new proposition’ presented by himself and the French Ambassador to the Porte, had no chance of acceptance, ‘even in a modified shape,’ adds—‘I have hitherto exerted my almost solitary efforts in favor of peace under every conceivable disadvantage, including even that which results, in Turkish estimation, from the presence of the allied squadrons in these waters.’ Writing later on the same day, he says—‘Your Lordship may be assured that I omitted nothing which my instructions, my recollections, or my reflection could suggest, in order to make an impression on his (Reshid Pacha’s) mind. I lament to say that all my efforts were unavailing. I did, however, the only thing which remained for me to do at the moment I took my leave with evident marks of disappointment and dissatisfaction, expressing in strong terms my apprehension, that the Pacha would one day have reason to look back with painful regret on the issue of our interview.’

Lord Stratford next tries the Sultan himself, in presenting to him ‘Vice-Admiral Dundas, and the officers under his command.’ The result he describes in the following language: ‘After the officers had retired, I saw the Sultan in private, and availed myself of the opportunity to press the arguments I had already employed in favor of peace. Whatever impression I may have made on his Majesty’s mind—and his manner encouraged some hope in that respect, especially on the score of humanity, and of the approach of winter—his language was in complete accordance with that of his minister.’ And when at length the importunities and reproaches of the Western Powers extorted from the Porte a reluctant promise to suspend the commencement of hostilities for a few days, that promise was broken. Lord Clarendon, writing to Lord Stratford, November 8th, 1853, says—‘Her Majesty’s Government entirely approve the proceedings adopted by your Excellency, as reported in your despatch of the 21st ultimo, for preventing the commencement of hostilities, and they much regret that the promise you obtained to that effect should not have been acted upon. Her Majesty’s Government are anxious to receive the explanation upon this subject, which your Excellency has doubtless demanded from the Porte.’

Mr. B. gives full authority for the foregoing by specific references to the “Blue Book,” which we here omit.

themselves into a court of arbitration in the interests of Turkey; they made an award, which they declared to be safe and honorable for both parties; this award was accepted by Russia, and rejected by Turkey; and they then turned round upon their own award, declared it to be 'totally inadmissible,' and made war upon the very country whose Government, at their suggestion and urgent recommendation, had frankly accepted it. At this moment England is engaged in a murderous warfare with Russia, although the Russian Government accepted her own terms of peace, and has been willing to accept them in the sense of England's own interpretation of them ever since they were offered; and at the same time England is allied with Turkey, whose Government rejected the award of England, and who entered into the war in opposition to the advice of England. Surely, when the Vienna note was accepted by Russia, the Turks should have been prevented from going to war, or should have been allowed to go to war at their own risk.

I have said nothing here of the fact that all these troubles have sprung out of the demands made by France upon the Turkish Government, and urged in language more insulting than any which has been shown to have been used by Prince Menschikoff. I have said nothing of the diplomatic war which has been raging for many years past in Constantinople, and in which England has been behind no other Power in attempting to subject the Porte to foreign influences. I have said nothing of the abundant evidence there is that we are not only at war with Russia, but with all the Christian population of the Turkish empire, and that we are building up our Eastern Policy on a false foundation, namely, on the perpetual maintenance of the most immoral and filthy of all despotisms over one of the fairest portions of the earth which it has desolated, and over a population which it has degraded, but has not been able to destroy. I have said nothing of the wretched delusion that we are fighting for civilization in supporting the Turk against the Russian, and against the subject Christian population of Turkey. I have said nothing about our pretended sacrifices for freedom in this war, in which one great and now dominant ally is a monarch who, last in Europe, struck down a free constitution, and dispersed by military violence a national Representative Assembly.

My doctrine would have been non-intervention in this case. The danger of the Russian power was a phantom; the necessity of permanently upholding the Mahometan rule in Europe is an absurdity. Our love for civilization, when we subject the Greeks and Christians to the Turks, is a sham; and our sacrifices for freedom, when working out the behests of the Emperor of the French, and coaxing Austria to help us, is a pitiful imposture. The evils of non-intervention were remote and vague, and could neither be weighed nor described in any accurate terms. The good we can judge something of already, by estimating the cost of a contrary policy. And what is that cost? War in the north and south of Europe, threatening to involve every country of Europe. Many, perhaps fifty millions sterling, in the course of expenditure by this country alone, to be raised from the taxes of a people whose extrication from ignorance and poverty can only be hoped for from the continuance of peace. The disturbance of trade throughout the world, the derangement of monetary affairs, and difficulties and ruin to thousands of families. Another year of high prices of food, notwithstanding a full harvest in England, chiefly because war interferes with imports, and we have declared our principal foreign food-growers to be our enemies. The loss of human life to an enormous extent. Many thousands of our countrymen have already perished of pestilence and in the field; and hundreds, perhaps thousands of English families will be plunged into sorrow, as a part of the penalty to be paid for the folly of the nation and its rulers.

When the time comes for the 'inquisition for blood,' who shall answer for these things? You have read the tidings from the Crimea; you have

perhaps, shuddered at the slaughter; you remember the terrific picture,—I speak not of the battle, and the charge, and the tumultuous excitement of the conflict, but of the field after the battle,—the Russians, in their frenzy or their terror, shooting Englishmen who would have offered them water to quench their agony of thirst; Englishmen in crowds rifling the pockets of the men they had slain or wounded, taking their few shillings of roubles, and discovering among the plunder of the stiffening corpses images of the “Virgin and Child.” You have read this, and your imagination has followed the fearful details. This is war,—every crime which human nature can commit or imagine, every horror it can perpetrate or suffer; and this it is which our Christian Government recklessly plunges into, and which so many of our countrymen at this moment think it patriotic to applaud! You must excuse me if I cannot go with you. I will have no part in this terrible crime. My hands shall be unstained with the blood which is being shed. The necessity of maintaining themselves in office may influence an administration; delusions may mislead a people; *Vattel* may afford you a law and a defence; but no respect for men who form a Government, no regard I have for ‘going with the stream,’ and no fear of being deemed wanting in patriotism, shall influence me in favor of a policy which, in my conscience, I believe to be as criminal before God as it is destructive of the true interest of my country.”

MR. BRIGHT has since addressed a meeting at Manchester on the foregoing subject:—“Though the spacious Corn Exchange was crowded to the doors, not only was there not a whisper of dissent from the peace sentiments uttered in the broadest and most uncompromising manner, but they were received with a fervor of enthusiasm which we have never seen exceeded. Mr. Bright must have felt when those hundreds of the most intelligent electors of Manchester leaped to their feet, as with one common impulse, the moment he stood up to speak, and greeted him with a cheer of such rich and ringing heartiness as has seldom been heard, that he was already reaping his reward for the true heroism with which he flung himself into the breach to withstand the headlong madness of the public.”

MISCELLANEOUS.

ACQUISITIONS BY CONQUEST TEMPORARY.—In no age has conquest, attended with violence, presented any permanent features. It seems as if the very organization of human nature rebelled against the sufferance of such a state of things. What remains of the Assyrian and Persian conquests, but mounds of dust and rubbish? Alexander stalked through the world like a giant, leaving a broad trail behind him; but in a couple of generations it was wholly obliterated. The glories of Greece and Rome only survived in the few authors whose works have been preserved by something approaching to a miracle. And if we come to more modern times, how many proofs we can lay our hands on, to show the shifting, quicksand nature of the terrible word ‘conquest,’ a word round which clings a kind of glitter, but, when fairly examined, is found to be synonymous with destruction and treachery, and every moral perversion. Where are the conquests of Jenghis Khan, of Tamerlane, of Mahmoud? Gone! they were engulfed in the waves of immediately subsequent circumstances. What hold does Spain retain on her possessions in America? Where are the acquisitions of Portugal? Where the kingdoms and principalities of Napoleon? “Fallen—fallen—fallen!” They perished in the reaction of the forces that erected them. England, as a great country, is yet a young country. She only started in her career of greatness in the seventeenth century; but